News Release
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Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

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KIRBY VALIDATES INTEGRITY OF WAIT TIMES STRATEGY

Makes Recommendations for Further Improvement

TORONTO – Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman today released former Senator Michael Kirby's independent review of how the province reports on its wait time strategy.

"Senator Kirby's report validates the integrity of Ontario's Wait Time Strategy," said Smitherman. "He confirms that we are measuring, reporting and reducing wait times in a transparent and reliable way so patients have better access to care. I welcome his recommendations as they will help us continue to build on our success and make the system even better."

After the Auditor General expressed concerns last December, the government asked former Senator Kirby to provide an independent review of the wait times information system and provide recommendations for improvement.

Kirby's report acknowledges "in less than two and a half years, enormous progress has been made in developing and implementing a wait time information and management system in Ontario."

"The success of our plan to reduce wait times is a result of the hard work and dedication of thousands of health care professionals who have contributed so much to deliver better access for patients," Smitherman added. "I want to take this opportunity to thank them and to thank Senator Kirby for recognizing their efforts through his report."

In October 2005, the province began reporting on its Ontario Wait Times website, information on wait times for five key health service areas – hip and knee replacements, cataract surgery, cancer surgery, MRI/CT exams and selected cardiac procedures – making Ontario a leader in Canada in providing solid, reliable information on wait times.

On February 8th and 9th, the Ontario government will participate in the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Wait Times Success Conference in Toronto, where front line clinical leaders will present best practices and progress toward wait times reduction across Canada.

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